

MAJOR CLARK'S COVENANT

Gives Reasons Why It Should Be Discarded Takes Up Pact Section by Section and Shows Wherein It Is Found to Be Fatally Defective.

Following is the full text of the address of Major J. Reuben Clark on the league of nations covenant at the Weber Normal College Auditorium last night:

A great deal has been said and is being said regarding the effects of the league of nations in ushering in and maintaining that reign of law and order and righteousness which in religious parlance we speak of as the millennium. Of course, if this were the instrumentality by which any such condition could be brought about, we would be recreant to our traditions and to the everlasting principles upon which our government is founded, if we did not join in such a movement. A year ago one was forced, in commenting upon the provisions of the covenant and their possible effect upon the world's condition as an establishment of a millennium, merely to prognosticate, and though one's devotion and forebodings were based upon principles as firm and solid as the rocks themselves, namely, unchanging human nature, human experience and the reaction of the human mind to the environment, nevertheless all that was said was prognostication.

Under these circumstances it was of course open to any man to differ with any prognostication, to put forth one of his own. The only way any of us of the great public was able to make up his mind at all about it was through the faith of his own speaker. And, of course, if our faith were misplaced, our conclusion was wrong.

But, today we are more fortunate because now we not only know what the league actually does in action, but also what it does not do. The council of the league—that body which Mr. Wilson repeatedly said was the only body having any power of organization for more than 9 months, and from its operations and failure of operation during that time, and from the evidence furnished by those in control of it, we may perceive with much clearness the limitations under which it must always move and by which its results will always be circumscribed.

PEOPLES IN LEAGUE.

As outlined in the treaty of peace, 45 states, including the five self-governing colonies of Great Britain, were to be members of the league. Of these thirty-two were to be original members and thirteen were to be invited members. On January 19, 1920, the first meeting of the council of the league, which was held in Versailles, France, under the presidency of Mr. Wilson, the prime minister of France, issued the press statement showing that 36 of the 45 states, including all of the invited states, had become members of the league. The six states omitted were the United States, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

The total number of people to be represented in this league under the original scheme was in round numbers 1,156,000,000. Of these 1,156,000,000 people not included within the original league project, about 200,000,000 belonged to Russia, Turkey, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Mexico, the rest being savage and semi-civilized tribes. As a matter of fact there are now represented in the league approximately 1,066,000,000 people, and there are now 118,000,000 of these who were originally scheduled to be invited to the league. Thus, as to the people whom it is the league's duty to befriend, there are more than ten people in the league for each person out. Taking the whole world, including those not invited to join the league, there are in the league now two and one-half persons for everyone that is out of the league. Under these circumstances the league ought now to be more than a mere new-born infant. Indeed we might expect it to be a well-matured youth displaying the characteristics of the league which are to be operative in it as a man. Looking to the whole picture I am inclined to believe that the league is doing during the ten months of its existence and what it is doing now, we may reasonably forecast what may be expected from it in the future.

PURPOSE OF LEAGUE.

Before taking up in detail the work of the league council, I think it would be well to consider the prime purpose for which the league was created, as that has been disclosed by Mr. Wilson who is given credit or blame, both in Europe and America, for having formed the league plan upon the peace conference.

MR. WILSON'S VIEWS.

Speaking before an audience at Omaha, Mr. Wilson said in reference to Article X:

(p. 11.) "I would consider myself recreant to every mother and father, every wife and sweetheart in this country, if I consented to the ending of this war without a guaranty that there would be no other."

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On the other hand, and notwithstanding these expressions, he repeatedly gave expression to ideas of a contrary character. In St. Louis, he said:

"The treaty of peace is based upon the protection of the weak against the strong, and there is only one force that can protect the weak against the strong and that is a universal concert and the strength of mankind. That is the league of nations."

Speaking in San Francisco he said: "My fellow citizens, that behind the moral judgment of the United States people to the peace conference, the United States was respected in those revolutionary days when there were three millions of us, we are, it appears, very much more respected now than there were more than one hundred million of us."

So probably it all comes back to the proposition at Paris, the moral force of the league, the moral force which is thrown out to hold the enemy, while the real battle line of the actual physical force is being drawn up in battle array.

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Of course, answering for myself and from my own limited knowledge and experience, I would have no hesitation in saying that the means of enforcing the covenant would in final analysis be the blood and iron of the principal powers, the United States, France, Great Britain, Italy and Japan, for after all, when human power is admitted, no guarantee could be given that they would not be aroused, nothing but actual physical force can subdue the pride of man. And, if we would have assumed that the means to be used to bring about this great end were means of military force.

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In presenting the league plan to the peace conference at Versailles, Mr. Wilson said in reference to the league of nations:

"The executive council and of the assembly, and of the reference to either of such bodies of any dispute between nations."

Through this instrumentality we are depending primarily and chiefly upon one great force, and this is the moral force of the public opinion of the world. The public opinion of the world is the power of mankind. It is the power of the united moral forces of the world and in the covenant of the league nations, the moral forces of the world are mobilized."

He added, however, may we not think with a sick wink and as a nod to the world, that the league is a mere new-born infant, indeed we might expect it to be a well-matured youth displaying the characteristics of the league which are to be operative in it as a man. Looking to the whole picture I am inclined to believe that the league is doing during the ten months of its existence and what it is doing now, we may reasonably forecast what may be expected from it in the future.

Before taking up in detail the work of the league council, I think it would be well to consider the prime purpose for which the league was created, as that has been disclosed by Mr. Wilson who is given credit or blame, both in Europe and America, for having formed the league plan upon the peace conference.

Speaking before an audience at Omaha, Mr. Wilson said in reference to Article X:

(p. 11.) "I would consider myself recreant to every mother and father, every wife and sweetheart in this country, if I consented to the ending of this war without a guaranty that there would be no other."

At St. Paul, he said:

(p. 11.) "This was a war to make similar wars impossible."

Later at Bismarck, he said:

(p. 23.) "Any way you take this question you are faced straight away to this alternative, either this treaty with this covenant or a disturbed world and certain war. There is no escape from it."

In Coeur d'Alene, right near our doors, he said:

(p. 161.) "It is a league to bring it about that there shall be substituted for it arbitration and the calm settlement of discussion."

In Portland, speaking of the last war, he said:

(p. 205.) "It was a war to put an end to wars of aggression forever."

And in Denver, he said:

(p. 23.) "The first of all, the substitution of arbitration and discussion for war, if you get nothing else, it is worth the whole game to get that."

It is true that on more than one occasion he shaded off a bit from the substance of these statements. For example in his speech at Indianapolis, he said:

(p. 23.) "Nobody in his senses claims for the covenant of the league of nations that it is certain to stop war, but I confidently assert that it makes war violently improbable."

And in Oakland, California, he said:

ing in the covenant of the league we do adopt and we should adopt certain fundamental moral principles of right and justice, which I dare say, we need not promise to live up to, but we are certainly proud to promise to live up to."

On the other hand, and notwithstanding these expressions, he repeatedly gave expression to ideas of a contrary character. In St. Louis, he said:

"The treaty of peace is based upon the protection of the weak against the strong, and there is only one force that can protect the weak against the strong and that is a universal